11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

dead were buried securely bound in a knee-to-chest position, still the custom among the Andamanese). The Onges go no further than this and the idea of a Lord of the Spirits who rules all things, although on Great Andaman there has been some progress towards more anthropomorphic concepts. The complete absence of any form of cult, prayer, representation, or votive offering cannot, I feel, be the result of cultural decline from a more advanced age; this would have resulted in gross distortion and illogical superstition, but not in complete absence of any 'religious' practices of any kind.

18 SACRIFICE

No sacrifices of any kind are practised in the Andamans, nor is there any concept of propitiation, although there is evidence that even in the late Palaeolithic era some form of ritual sacrifice was practised, at least in Europe and probably over a much wider area. One would assume from this, and from paragraph 17 above, that the Andamanese is an even older culture.

19 TABOOS

Although my own experiences among the Onges have led me to think that taboos do not exist, some authors have asserted (in my view wrongly) their existence on Great Andaman. It is not, however, possible to draw any reliable conclusions on this point.

20 CEREMONIAL

The complete absence of any form of ritual surrounding birth, the purification of women, initiation, etc., or evidence of any such ritual in the past, is striking, in view of the prevalence in all the surrounding areas of strictly observed ceremonial for many occasions. As in the case of religion, such complete absence can only mean that the Andamanese became isolated before the idea of ritual spread to the area.

21 MEASUREMENT

The Andamanese have no means of counting, and no words to express gradations of time or size; to them everything is either 'small' or 'big'. They take no interest in the passing of years, and have no idea of their own age. To them life is but the passing of the seasons and the harvests of game and fish and fruits that they bring. This utter lack of any sense